

Supplemental Lesson Plan: Slavery in Bentonville



In this lesson for grade 8, students will learn that the face of slavery was not universal. They will discover how slavery differed from region to region and even from farm to farm only a short distance apart. Students will examine slave schedules to compare and contrast how the institution of slavery was practiced at different places in the Bentonville area.

Goals:

NCSCOS Social Studies Grade 8: 4.02; 4.03; 4.04

NCSCOS English/Language Arts Grade 8: 1.01a-e; 1.02c, d, e; 1.03b, d;
2.01a-h; 2.02a-c, e-g; 4.02c; 5.01a-c, f, i, j; 6.01a-i; 6.02b, d

Objectives

After classroom discussion, historical background reading, and examination of the census slave schedule for 1860, students will:

- read and understand the census schedule.
- recognize differences in slave ownership among the Bentonville citizenry.
- understand that slavery was not the same in all instances or in all areas.

Teacher Planning

Provide the following materials either through web access to *The North Carolina Civil War Experience* or through downloaded handouts.

- Site Narratives - The Battle of Bentonville
The Harper Family
Slavery in Bentonville
- 1860 Census Slave Schedule for Bentonville
- Paper and pencil for letter writing
- K-W-L Chart - if desired to facilitate class discussion

Time Requirement

45 minutes to one hour is required (for block scheduling: add more time to edit and share interviews/articles)

Bell Ringer Activity

Have students write on a piece of paper their perceptions of slavery in North Carolina and what slaves' lives were like.

Teacher Input

- A. Give historical background on slavery, explaining why people owned slaves, what enslaved people did on a daily basis, and the difference between the southern or agrarian economic system and the northern or industrial one.
- B. Lead students in a class discussion (Socratic Seminar, if applicable) to predict how it must have felt to be enslaved and what your everyday life was like. How would you have felt about the Battle of Bentonville? Who would you want to win? (Be sure to focus on the differences between an enslaved person on a large plantation and the lives that the Harper slaves would have lived. Would the two have different feelings?)

Classroom Activities: Guided Practice

1. Students should read the chapters of *The North Carolina Civil War Experience* on **The Road to Secession**, which offers details on slavery in North Carolina, and **North Carolina as a Civil War Battlefield**, which will give vital background information on the Battle of Bentonville.
2. Read the historical information on slavery in Bentonville. Then discuss and explain the census and slave schedules showing John Harper and Willis Cole. This information can be read out loud or upper level students may read it individually. Slave schedules should be explained by the instructor.
3. As a class, discuss how well (or not so well) students predicted what slavery was like in Bentonville and North Carolina.
4. Pair students up into groups of two. Explain to students that one of them is to put themselves in the shoes of Alec or Clarsey Harper, who has just been freed during the Battle of Bentonville. The other student should assume the role of a newspaper reporter whose assignment is to interview the recently freed Alec or Clarsey. The interviewer should be sure to ask questions about what life was like as a Harper slave, what it felt like during the battle and what it now feels like to be free. The student portraying Alec or Clarsey should also provide information about his/her plans now that he/she is free. This is an opportunity for the teacher to introduce slave narratives as a genre of literature.

Classroom Activities: Independent Practice

1. Students are provided with time to conduct the interview, take notes and write an article about Alec's or Clarsey's life before and after freedom.
2. The student who conducted the interview should be prepared to "report" back to the class. The class should listen and look for accurate information and expressions of personal feelings.

Closure

Bring the students together as a class to review slavery in Bentonville and North Carolina, and why it was different from their perceptions at the beginning of the class.

Assessment

Students should be able to write an essay that clearly describes the life experiences of the Harper family slaves. This essay should describe how their life experiences were different from those of enslaved people on much larger plantations. The students should express their thoughts on the feelings that newly freed slaves may have had after the Battle of Bentonville.

[Link to Slave Schedule page 1](#)

[Link to Slave Schedule page 2](#)

K-W-L Chart

Name: _____
Teacher's Name: _____

Subject: _____
Date: _____

K What I <u>Know</u>	W What I <u>Want To</u> Learn	L What I have <u>Learned</u>

(THIS CHART IS SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE USED IN THE FIRST SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON. THEY SHOULD BE MADE CONSISTENT.)